

not to the President but to the people they represent and to the economy and wages we need to see grow.

Well, as we heard from Secretary Ash Carter today at lunch, this is important for national security reasons as well. It is important America thoroughly engage in Asia with our trading partners because there is a strange but simple phenomenon that occurs when two countries trade with each other. They are sure a lot less likely to go to war with each other if they are doing business and talking to each other.

From a national security perspective, we want to make sure we make the rules with regard to trading in Asia and that we don't default and let China fill the void, which they will be happy if we don't take care of our business.

Trade is important to my State, and as I said, it is important to the United States. In the 20th century all we needed back in Texas were farm-to-market roads to find customers for our goods. But in the 21st century, our customers are not just in the next town over, they are all around the world. As I said, 95 percent of our potential customers live outside of the United States.

This legislation would help connect American farmers, ranchers, and small businesses to the markets around the world which would help our economy. As the country's largest exporter, we in Texas know the value of trade firsthand because we depend on it. I know a lot of people think, well, Texas is just about oil and gas. Well, that is not actually true. We have a very diversified economy. But part of what we have done, which has set us apart from the rest of the country in terms of economic growth and job creation, is trade.

Last year, Texas reported \$289 billion of exported goods, with some 41,000 businesses exporting goods from Texas to outside the country. Now, this type of trade has helped our economy grow and keep people employed, able to provide food for their families and other necessities of life. We have prospered, relatively speaking, during a time when much of the American economy has been relatively stagnant and trade has been an important part of that.

Opening up our country to greater trade through the trade promotion authority would help American businesses send their goods to even more markets. The United States is the leading exporter of agricultural products. Last year alone, America's farmers and ranchers who could benefit tremendously from this legislation exported more than \$152 billion in agricultural commodities and products to customers around the world.

In Texas, for example, in the agriculture sector, we lead the Nation in exports of beef and cotton. By opening up more international opportunities for these products, our economy would grow and our Texas commodities, such as beef and cotton, would become staples in fast-growing markets like Asia.

We also know, as I suggested earlier, that trade is not just about selling

products, it is about the jobs that are necessary to make and grow the products we sell. According to a report released last month by the International Trade Administration, as of 2014, more than 1 million jobs in Texas alone are supported by exporting, and in the entire country that figure is 11 million. So with 11 million jobs dependent on exports, why in the world wouldn't we want to improve our ability to export more abroad to other markets around the world and to create more jobs in the process?

Well, TPA is important because it would allow Congress to also have clear oversight over the pending trade agreements. I know there is a lot of skepticism about the kind of deal that is being cut behind closed doors. We would open those doors and bring it out into the open and allow all Americans to examine it. And we, as their representatives, will exam it as well and ask the hard questions, such as why is this in the best interest of the American farmer, rancher, and manufacturer.

We know that TPP—the Trans-Pacific Partnership, which is the big Asia trade agreement—alone makes up about 40 percent of the world's economy.

I admit I am a little disappointed that the Democrats, with the exception of one Senator, would choose to block this important piece of legislation. With so much of the world's purchasing power located beyond our borders, one would think that on a bipartisan basis we would all support opening up new access to consumers and markets for America's farmers, ranchers, and manufactured goods, and that should be a top priority.

Unfortunately, our colleagues across the aisle did not see our Nation's businesses and our economy as their main priority today. I hope that after today's failure of this particular legislation, we will engage in serious negotiations.

I agree with the majority leader, that after November 4, the American people gave the U.S. Senate new management. They were dissatisfied with the management of last year and previous years because all they saw was dysfunction. Well, now the U.S. Senate is starting to function again. We are starting to produce important pieces of legislation, such as the first budget since 2009. This is a great opportunity for us on a bipartisan basis—on a non-partisan basis—to do something really good.

I hope, after making the mistake of blocking this legislation, that our colleagues—the 14 so-called progrowth Democrats out of the 46 across the aisle—will see fit to work with us to try and move this legislation forward.

ORDER FOR RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 4 p.m., the Senate stand in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. CORNYN. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. COLLINS. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS SUBJECT TO THE CALL OF THE CHAIR

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 3:59 p.m., recessed subject to the call of the Chair and reassembled at 5:29 p.m. when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Ms. AYOTTE).

MORNING BUSINESS

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. THUNE. Madam President, yesterday I missed the vote on S. Con. Res. 16, which states U.S. policy on the release of American citizens in Iran, because I was touring tornado damage in Delmont, in my home State of South Dakota. Had I been able to be here, I would have voted in support of this concurrent resolution. Iran's treatment of these detained Americans is reprehensible, and I believe we should be using every diplomatic tool at our disposal to obtain their release.

VOTE EXPLANATION

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I was necessarily absent during the Senate's consideration of S. Con. Res. 16, which states that Iran should immediately release Saeed Abedini, Amir Hekmati, and Jason Rezaian, and cooperate with the U.S. Government to locate and return Robert Levinson. The resolution also states that the U.S. Government should use every diplomatic tool at its disposal to secure their immediate release. Had I been present, I would have voted in support of S. Con. Res. 16.

MEMORIAL DAY

Mrs. STABENOW. Madam President, I wish to reflect on this year's Memorial Day and the importance of this holiday in American life.

As I attend Memorial Day parades and commemorations, I am struck by our spirit of national unity. I know that across Michigan—and across our Nation—our fellow Americans are taking part in similar gatherings where we stop and reflect on our history and the sacrifice made by so many in order to bring our Nation to where we are today.